

Simulcasting digital video programs for broadcast and interactive services

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To provide interactivity, data communication through wireless telephone network (e.g. cellular) is combined with a broadband digital transmission through a broadcast network. In the preferred embodiment, the broadcast network utilizes multiple transmitters at separately located sites simultaneously broadcasting the same multi-channel, multi-program signal. Broadcast waves from the transmitters propagate throughout substantially overlapping portions of the service area. Customer premises receiving systems include a receiving antenna and one or more digital entertainment terminals. The terminal includes a channel selector and digital receiver for capturing a digital transport stream from a selected channel. A processor converts selected program information from the transport stream for presentation, e.g. via a television set. The terminal also includes a CPU controlling the operation of the channel selector and the processor in response to user inputs. The CPU also communicates signaling information for interactive services via a data modem and a wireless telephone transceiver included in the terminal and the wireless telephone network. The terminal may also include a telephone interface that permits standard customer premises telephones to send and receive calls using the wireless telephone transceiver, thus providing a bypass of local loop services marketed by a telephone company.

